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### CONTENTS.

OSBORNE. BEFORE MIDNIGHT, SIX DECEMBERS 1897.  
 JOYCE. Chaps. XXXVII.—XL.  
 MRS. OLIPHANT ON VENICE.  
 A PLEA FOR LANDLORDS.  
 PRINCES YIELA: AN AFRICAN EPISODE.  
 CESAR BORGIA.—III. HIS CAPTIVITY, FLIGHT, AND DEATH. By M. CHARLES TRIARTE.  
 IRISH AFFAIRS AS THEY NOW STAND. By AN IRISH LIBERAL.  
 MR. KINGLAKE'S "INVASION OF THE CRIMEA."  
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 WORK FOR WILLING HANDS: A PRACTICAL PLAN FOR STATE-AIDED EMIGRATION.  
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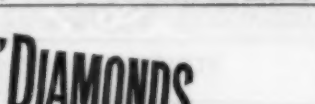
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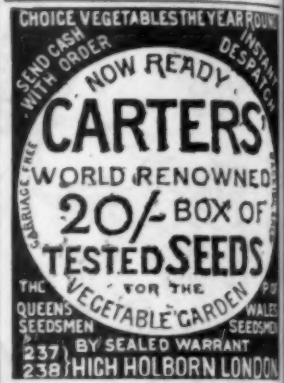


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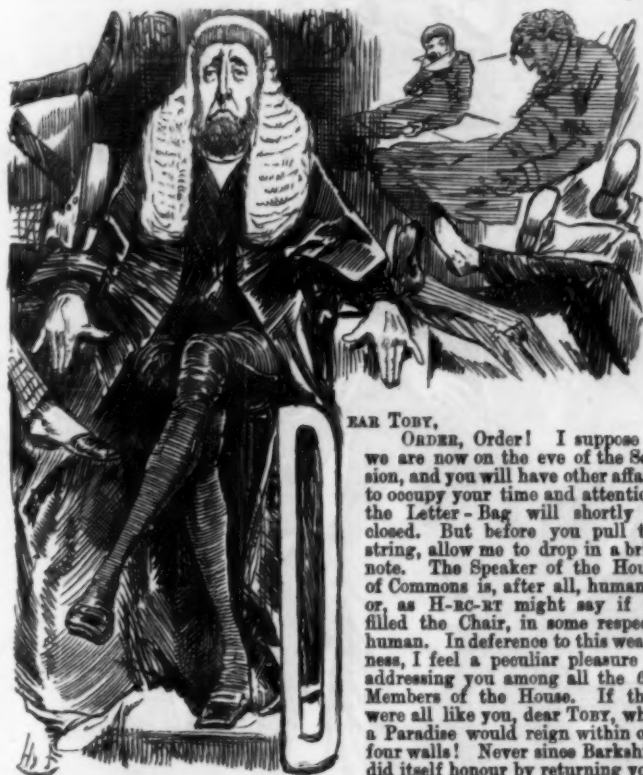
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## THE LETTER-BAG OF TOBY M.P.

FROM MR. SP-KEE.

Sandy, Beds. Saturday.



EAR TOBY.

ORDER, Order! I suppose as we are now on the eve of the Session, and you will have other affairs to occupy your time and attention, the Letter-Bag will shortly be closed. But before you pull the string, allow me to drop in a brief note. The Speaker of the House of Commons is, after all, human—or, as H-EC-ET might say if he filled the Chair, in some respects human. In deference to this weakness, I feel a peculiar pleasure in addressing you among all the 670 Members of the House. If they were all like you, dear TOBY, what a Paradise would reign within our four walls! Never since Barkshire did itself honour by returning you, have I once had occasion to suspend

you. (Excuse me; but I suppose, if in the troublous times ahead of us such a misfortune came to pass, I should have to seize you by the tail!) Never once have you moved the adjournment of the House, delivered a prosy speech, questioned the decision of the Chair, or behaved otherwise than as a model Member of Parliament. I wish there were more like you.

But there are not, and we must take things as we find them. They have been pretty lively since I first sat in the Chair, and from all portents they are likely to be still more so in the Session that opens next week. I observe that Mr. P-RN-LL has been advising his Young Men to avoid obstruction and adopt mannerly ways. That is all very well for Mr. P-RN-LL, who has pleasantly passed the recess far from political strife. But I can well understand some of his compatriots asking whether, because Mr. P-RN-LL has not been in prison, there shall be no more cakes and ale? W-LL-M O'B-R-N fresh from his plank bed, T. D. S-LL-V-N just freed from gentler restrictions, and Mr. P-W-E tired of hanging like M-N-M-T's coffin between heaven and earth, are likely to take another view of the situation. In and out of the Chair these fifteen years, I know very well what it is for a Leader of a Party to discountenance obstruction, and what effect it has upon the course of business. Sir ST-FE-ED N-ETIC-TE, when he led the Conservative Party, was honestly opposed to obstruction. But that did not prevent GRANDOLPH and his merry men stopping all progress. GL-DST-W-E is equally shocked at the adoption of any means of obstruction less subtle than the occupation of two hours in saying what might well have been uttered in twenty minutes. But, apart from the Irish Members, the Sage of Queen Anne's Gate and some other Members who sit in that part of the House, are certainly not to be accused of docility in following their titular leader.

B-L-F-E is the only man who has a practical scheme on hand for combating obstruction. Of course if one by one the most truculent of the Irish Members are cast into prison, the available forces of obstruction in the House of Commons must be diminished. Sir B-YLS R-CH-E had not this particular illustration in his mind when he made his famous declaration. But the application holds equally good. B-L-F-E has done his best, the only sign of maladroitness about his proceeding being in the somewhat indiscreet haste with which it was inaugurated. If Irish Members are sent to spend their Christmas Day in prison, under sentences of two months' confinement, it is clear that their appearance in the House of Commons cannot be postponed long after the commencement of the Session. It is not for me even to hint at counsel in so delicate a matter. I am not responsible for the Chief Secretary's action, and am called upon neither to approve it nor to disapprove it. But, viewed in connection with the question of

obstruction, there is evidently a chronological error at the basis of Mr. B-L-F-E's proceedings. But he is young and ardent, and experience may bring its lessons.

I daresay you will be glad to hear that I approach the new Session in renewed health and I need hardly add, with indomitable spirit. I am glad to be able to add that SM-TH, who looked in the other day, is also ready for his work. He has just returned from Pau, which he was a little surprised to find is, after all, not a river. Otherwise his mind preserves its customary serenity. He tells me that on some rare occasions, when there was smooth water in the Mediterranean, he practised a new pounce, which he believes will prove effective in preserving the discipline of the House and supporting the dignity of the Chair. He wanted to take his coat off and show me how it was done, but I decided to defer the pleasure. I would rather share in the surprise which awaits the House.

On the whole I am glad that SM-TH's removal to another place has been deferred. Of course if he had gone B-L-F-E would have come along, and that in some particulars is not a pleasant prospect. It is a very small matter, and to you who sit on the other side of the House with the view partially obscured by the Table, it will be hardly comprehensible, but the fact is I could not face without disturbance the prospect of having B-L-F-E's legs in close proximity throughout a long sitting. It is bad enough when it is part of his game of aggravation to absent himself from the House as much as possible, more particularly at the hour when Irish Members want to put questions. If he were Leader of the House he must perforce be in his place for something like six parts of a ten-hours' sitting, and I am afraid I could not stand it. It is impossible to convey to you a full sense of the mental torture suffered after many hours' strained attention to debate by the recurrent intrusion of apprehension of what B-L-F-E will next do with his legs. Whether he will ever succeed in his lifelong attempt to kick GL-DST-W-E under the table, is a familiar question I shrink from recalling in these days of recess. Even now I tremble when I think of the possible apparition in the course of debate of the feet of the Leader of the House on the Table. It is not fair that the already overburdened President of an assembly like the House of Commons should be freighted with petty cares of this kind, and I hope that SM-TH will stop where he is.

I envy brother H-MFD-N the great advantage of having had D-ZY so long the Leader of the House whilst he sat in the Chair. Long before I had any notion that the matter would have a personal interest for me, I have from the Front Opposition Bench watched D-ZY in his place—the folded arms, the crossed legs, with the coat-tails brought forward placidly covering the knees, the downcast head, the half-closed eyes. There was a soothing assistant to the SPEAKER in the discharge of his irritating duties. The effigy of a Crusader supine on a tombstone does not come more nearly to the *beau idéal* of a Leader of the House as seen from the Speaker's Chair, than did D-SR-LL. GR-MD-LPH when he was Leader, in his comical way recalled this picture which he, too, had often seen. He occasionally did it all, even to the orderly arrangement of the coat-tails, wrestling with himself, often ineffectually, to prevent his hands going up to curl his moustache. As for GL-DST-W-E he was most embarrassing. One had always to be on the look out for his sudden incursion. SM-TH was an improvement in despite of his tendency to pounce. But B-L-F-E would be worse than an appreciable addition to the Irish representation.

I mention these things, as probably in reviewing the difficulties of the position of a Speaker, they never occurred to you. When you come to sit in the Chair—a position that may perhaps hereafter be forced upon you—you will understand all.

The Clerk will now proceed to read the Orders of the Day, so no more at present from

Yours faithfully,

ARTH-R P-L.

## One for the Force.

BOBBY too open to the furtive "tip"?

How can the world malign in such a manner?

Although self-offered to the Peeler's grip,

'Tis plain a "Copper" will not take a "TANNER."



THE JAPANESE SCHOOL AT THE ROYAL  
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"Japanese Art . . . is the only living Art in the world . . . In comparatively few years Japan will become the acknowledged centre and leader of the Fine Arts."—  
Extract from Japanese Lecture on Japanese Art. Vide "Times," Jan. 25.

### FEELINGS AND FOOTLIGHTS.

MR. ARCHER has, in the current number of *Longman's*, despatched a second batch of arrows at the actor's art, and has certainly scored. His article has covered a great deal of ground. That Mr. WILSON BARRITT playing *Hamlet* shivering with the thermometer 14° below zero should have assumed a comfortable temperature from strong emotion as soon as he got on to the stage, and that Mr. CLAYTON after representing *Hugh Trevor* has been so exhausted that he has lain down on the floor of his dressing-room, and "feeling as though he had been thrashed all over," said to his dresser, "don't come near me for an hour" are certainly strange entertaining and even appalling facts. So indeed are some of the numerous anecdotes about tears and laughter, terror and blushes and other stage experiences, that he has

managed to collect by his catechetical method. Still there is more to come, and he has promised a third and concluding article. This should deal among other matters with the "emotions of Pantomime," a singularly interesting subject at this season of the year, and though we will not vouch for the perfect accuracy of every word, the subjoined brief extract may be taken as a fair sample of the way in which the whole matter will be handled.

Strictly observing my usual method of catechising, I have, as a preliminary step, addressed to several noted Clowns and Pantaloons the following questions:—

In scenes of commotion in real life, whether you are a participant in them (*e.g.*, in a regular Police row yourself), or a casual on-looker (*e.g.*, in a street riot, in which legs of mutton, loaves of bread, strings of sausages, bundles of turnips, babies, and Police-





## FAMILY CARES.

*First Excursionist.* "INT'RESTIN' RUINS THESE, SIR."

*Second Ditto (the Bread-winner).* "'MYE-ES, 'DON'T CARE FOR RUINS M'SELF THOUGH." (Pointing to his Olive Branches in the background.) "THEM'S RUIN ENOUGH FOR ME!"

men's helmets are flying on all sides in the air), do you consciously note effects for subsequent use upon the stage? Have you ever tried the effects of a red-hot poker on personal friends in your own drawing-room, and so automatically registering on your memory a phase of real life experience, been enabled to turn it to subsequent professional account?

The answers to the above questions are very various. Some Clowns deny that they have had experience of the red-hot poker in their own houses, but in making butter-slides, filling their pockets with perambulators, stray bonnets, and turkeys, they have, "as casual lookers-on," like Miss ISABEL BATEMAN, "noted effects of real commotion, and stored them up for possible use."

A distinguished Clown at one of the London theatres who, with Mr. LIONEL BROUEN, holds that "All scenes in real life are impressed on the mind of the real actor, and that, if occasion requires, he will try to reproduce them," writes to say that he has so thoroughly realised the necessity of this that he has often got up a pelt in the New Cut, tripped up old gentlemen coming down the steps of West-End Clubs, put the page-boy in his own kitchen oven, and tried to jump through the front of a hairdresser's shop. He has thus gained his "emotions" directly from real life, and when he translates them into action on the stage at night he does it with a force and realism that fairly electrifies his audience. He never, for instance, spares Pantaloon, but when he has either to trip him up, collar him with a ladder, or knock him down, he does it so thoroughly and effectively that in the present Pantomime in which he is now playing, though it is only in its fifth week since Christmas, the part of the Pantaloon has had to be refilled in turn by no less than seven fresh representatives, five of whom are laid up injured in a local hospital, while the other two have obtained summonses against him for assault. The writer adds that only the other night he made a great point in the representation of a street fight by hurling a bundle of real turnips right into the face of the leader of the orchestra, and with such good effect as to knock him backward off his stool. The house was extraordinarily excited by the incident, and showed by a prolonged burst of applause how it appreciated that the actor was really feeling in his own person something similar in

kind, and almost equal in degree, to the vivid pugilistic passion he was representing.

In a similar strain also writes a celebrated Pantaloon. Having once travelled on the Metropolitan Line in a second-class carriage with a third-class ticket, and having been detected and consequently shouted at by a little vulgar newspaper boy, he affirms that whenever, in the course of a scene, the Clown falsely accuses him of having committed some delinquency in the well-known stock phrase, "I saw yer do it," he is so absolutely awestruck, and his doddering gait becomes so tragic, that he fairly brings down the house.

It may be interesting to note, in conclusion, that a well-known Harlequin, on being questioned to account in some degree for the utterly unintelligible eccentricity of his movements, and the generally pointless though sportive frivolity of his character as delineated in action, admits that, like Mr. GEORGE CONQUEST, "he has on many occasions gone to Lunatic Asylums and collected effects for use on the stage." The article will also casually touch upon the effect on an actor of playing to an empty house, or with uncongenial surroundings, the catechetical inquiry taking some such shape as the following:—

A distinguished Actor informs me that on playing *Othello* in the provinces, where his terms with the management were "shares" after £15, on going on the stage and finding only eighteenpence in the pit and five orders in the dress circle, he has felt a lump in his throat that has nearly prevented his articulation. He also added the *Roderigo* on the occasion in question was drunk, and so frequently alluded to "Two Lovely Black Eyes" in the course of his part, that he was ultimately called on for a horn-pipe, which he gave, being eventually removed from the stage by the Doge, the Gasman, and the Prompter. Do you consider that such conditions would be calculated to stifle a tendency to a morbidly emotional rendering of the character, and would you conceive yourself justified in washing your hands of the performance, and after having it out with the Manager, leaving the house then and there without waiting to smother *Desdemona*?

RABIES IN RICHMOND PARK!—O Dear!



CHARLES WYNDHAM DISCOVERS RUSSIA.

The Gallant Explorer is here seen taking his little Davy and his treasure of an Ingot up the Neva to St. Petersburg.

## CHEAP (P) LAW.

A PROBABLE VIEW OF A POSSIBLE FUTURE.

SCENE—Chief Office of Messrs. BROWN, JONES AND ROBINSON, of Gray's Inn and The Temple, Barristers-at-Law. Enter Client, who attempts to attract attention of one of several Clerks.

Client (addressing a Clerk). Oh, please, I have come about a Chancery matter.

Clerk (looking up from a law-book). Better speak to some one else. I know nothing of the earlier stages of an action. (Pointing to another.) That gentleman, perhaps, can attend to you. Here, Mr. CHUCKLAW, Chancery Department.

Client. I have come about—  
Mr. Chucklaw (sharply). All right, Sir; you had better see Mr. JONES.

Client. But I prefer to see Mr. BROWN. The fact is, I have an introduction; and—

Mr. Chucklaw. Just as you like; but my advice is, see Mr. JONES. Client. You are very good; but I would prefer to see—

Mr. Chucklaw (sharply). All right, Sir, just as you please. (Turning to another Clerk.) Is Mr. BROWN in?

Other Clerk. Think he has just come back from Court during the adjournment for lunch.

Client (decisively). Then you will be so good as to give him my card.

[Scene changes to Room of Mr. BROWN, wherein that eminent Counsel is discovered in his robes devouring sandwiches.

Mr. Brown (hurriedly). Yes?

Client. Oh, if you please, I have come about a rather complicated matter.

Mr. Brown. Yea? Please give me the papers.

Client (confused). Papers? What papers?

Mr. Brown. I suppose you want my opinion. Well, if you will give me the case I will cast my eye over it, and let you know what I think of it after the adjournment of the Court. I have got rather a heavy matter on just now before Mr. Justice SOUTH, and shall be arguing before his Lordship until half-past four o'clock.

Client. But this is the first time I have been here. I have got a letter to you.

Mr. Brown (after a hurried perusal). Ah, I see. But you must go to Mr. JONES.

Client. But I would prefer to talk the matter over with you.

Mr. Brown. My dear Sir, it would be of no sort of use at present. I know absolutely nothing of the earlier stages of an action. No doubt it will get to me in time, when I shall have the greatest possible pleasure in discussing the matter with you. But that time will be when it is necessary to carry the matter into Court. Good-bye. Glad to have seen you.

Client. Dear me! I thought that now the two branches of the profession are merged into one, all of them would be able to help me.

[Leaves Mr. BROWN'S Room, and wanders about the passages until stopped by a door. He opens it, and enters a second room.

Gentleman at Work at a Table. Well, Sir, what is it?

Client. Oh, if you please, I want to talk over a matter of business. The fact is, I am a Trustee, and I am not quite sure—

Gentleman at Work at a Table (cutting him short). Oh, I know nothing about that sort of thing. My department is to prepare Bills of Costs.

Client. Well, Sir, can I see one of the Firm?

Gentleman at Work at a Table. I am one of the Firm. My name's ROBINSON. You want my partner—Mr. JONES.

Client (angrily). No, I don't, Sir. I particularly do not want Mr. JONES.

Gentleman at Work at a Table (good-naturedly). Well, I'm afraid no one else will be able to understand you. At any rate, I can't, so good-bye.

[Client returns to Clerks' Office, and is ultimately shewn into Mr. JONES.

Client. I think it right to tell you, Sir, that as I hear you are fond of fox-hunting (to which I have conscientious objections) I should have preferred seeing one or other of your partners.

Mr. Jones. Quite so. But never mind; tell me what it's all about.

(Interval of Two Years.)

Client (looking at his Bill of Costs). Why the amount is just as heavy as it would have been in the old days, if not heavier! The fusion of the two branches of the Legal Profession doesn't seem to have made law any cheaper.

[Scene closes in upon the Client's sorrowful reflections.

## A BENEVOLENT ADULTERATOR.

JOSEPH JUGGINS, twenty years ago, a spanking fortune made,

Not by bulling, or by bearing, or by mining speculation;—  
No; he drove a highly spirited, remunerative trade

In provisions, gently tempered by astute adulteration.

When his gains had mounted up to such a very handsome sum  
That it took a dozen clerks a week to find out what he owed,  
It befel him that his conscience, which had theretofore been numb,  
Roused itself to do its duty as an active moral good.

Its suggestions were not pleasant—nay, indeed, were the reverse—  
At his very heart's core, night and day, incessantly they gnawed,  
Pointing out with painful frequency that, probably, a curse  
Would attend upon emoluments derived from wholesale fraud.

"I have done a deal too well, I fear," repentant JUGGINS said,  
"With my oleo-margarine, retailed as Dorset of the best,  
With my tins of slimy odds-and-ends, my homicidal bread,  
And my sauces which from inexpensive drugs obtained their zest.

"I have made vast sums of money by those profitable teas,  
Which acquire peculiar fragrance from the foliage of the sloe;  
By my honey, manufactured independently of bees;  
By my eightpenny "sparkling," and my ninepenny Bordeaux.

"I must make full reparation, and with all convenient speed,  
To the much-offended sources of my evil-gotten wealth.  
Let me do some highly creditable philanthropic deed,  
Do it, too, exceeding promptly, and, if possible, by stealth!

"Shall I found an Institution for the permanent relief  
Of my deeply-injured clients of the lower middle-class,  
Who, in pocket or in health, have come to swift and hideous grief,  
By consuming food and drink which I supplied to them, alas?

"'Twould be sure to be mismanaged!—Happy thought!"—and here  
a smile

Played about the lips of JUGGINS. "'Tis quite obvious how I may  
Make the needful restitution to the victims of my guile,  
In a far more thoroughgoing, yet less ostentatious way."

Straight he opened all his principal emporia once more,  
And placarded his resolve to recommence the daily sale  
Of the edibles and potables in which he'd dealt before;  
But at prices unrecorded in the annals of retail.

At elevenpence a bottle, strange and wild as it may seem,  
He supplied East India Sherry, Comet Hock, and "Twenty" Port;  
He adulterated milk with thirty-three per cent. of cream,  
And retailed it to his clients at a halfpenny the quart.

Orange Pekoe and Young Hyson, sweetly flavoured and perfumed,  
Could be bought at his establishments for one-and-four the pound,  
And his fine old fragrant Mochas were extensively consumed  
At the price which JUGGINS paid to have the berries burnt and ground.

All the articles provided by this much-repentant wight  
Were superlative in quality, and yet so wondrous cheap, [night  
That his shops were thronged with customers from morning until  
While his business competitors had ample cause to weep.



As for him, his spirits regularly rose from day to day.  
In proportion to the chronic diminution of his pelf;  
He exulted in his losses, and was often heard to say,  
That a clear and spotless conscience was a fortune in itself.

When the brand of black remorse was quite effaced from JUGGINS' brow,

And the balance at his bankers wore the semblance of an O,  
All the ruined London tradesmen met, and registered a vow  
To be bitterly avenged upon the author of their woe.

In their wrath they turned and rent him—badly, I regret to say—  
Irretrievably, indeed, as far as JUGGINS was concerned;  
For his fragments were collected and in triumph borne away  
To the foot of Nelson's Column, where, next morning, they were buried.

But the people, prizing JUGGINS as a man of antique mould,  
As a credit to his country and an honour to his race,  
In the precincts of the Abbey raised a pyramid of gold,  
With the following inscription, deeply graven on its base:—

"IN MEMORIAM! This Monument commemorates the deeds  
Of a singularly generous and philanthropic man,  
Who expended all his substance to relieve his neighbours' needs,  
And reversed commercial principles to carry out his plan.

"Human jealousy removed him prematurely from this earth  
To a region where such sacrifice as his reward should find;  
And a sorrow-stricken Nation thus pays tribute to the worth  
Of J. JUGGINS, the lamented benefactor of mankind!"

### A WATERY GRIEVANCE.

MR. PUNCH, SIR,

As it is the last straw that breaks the poor Camel's back, so it is the last arrogant, if not impertinent demand of the imperious Water Company that condescends to supply me with the small quantity of water that I require for domestic purposes, that breaks down my powers of silent endurance.

Not content with charging me annually nearly as much for river-water as I pay my Wine Merchant for my liberal supply of fine Old Port, the Collector informs me that he purposes calling for the Christmas account on the 2nd of January; or if I prefer sending it before that time, he will be at home to receive it for one hour on two days of the week! What lordly airs this mere Waterman gives himself. At the back of the demand note I am furnished with such information as is expected to explain to me why I am charged so much, and this is what I learn from that wondrous document.

In the first place I am referred to the 15th and 16th cap. Vict. 160, section 3538, which, of course, not being an Astrologist, I do not understand. Anticipating, probably, this difficulty, the matter is cleared up by the information that all the services they so kindly render to me in the water line, if more than 160 feet above Trinity high-water mark, are charged one per cent. per annum additional. Now here I find a twofold difficulty. I do not know how high Trinity high-water mark is, and, if I did, I have nothing wherewith to measure 160 feet. I consulted my milkman, thinking he would probably know all about it, but he was really quite angry at my suggestion to that effect, and professed utter ignorance on the subject. A boating-man of my acquaintance tells me that he should think that the Trinity House, on Tower Hill, stands about twenty feet above the river at high-water, but I don't quite see how that important information helps me. He tells me, if I happen to know one of the Old Brethren of that Ancient House, he could perhaps assist me; but I don't, so I suppose I must yield the point.

I am next told that for every high service ten feet above the roadway, I must pay extra, and for every fixed Bath I must pay extra, so I have been measuring, with the assistance of a ladder, the outside of my sober dwelling—and a fearful cold I succeeded in catching during that risky operation—and find to my joy that by unfixing my Bath and using it, when required in my back drawing-room, I can elude these two abominable charges. But now comes such an awful combination of outrageous swindles in the form of definitions of the meaning of the familiar word domestic, as I should think was never before attempted, even by a Water Company.

I am informed that domestic supply does not include supplies for Steam-engines or Railway purposes, which is quite unnecessary information for me, as I have none in the house. But I also learn that it does not include water for warming purposes, or for baths, or for washing my little Brougham, or for watering my little garden, twenty feet by fifteen, or for watering my little horse, or, cruellest of all, for flushing a drain should it require it!

Can anything be conceived more monstrous? Here am I called upon to pay a considerable sum for water, and I am forbidden to use a drop of it for any of the above most necessary purposes. I must not use any of it, apparently, for warming my nocturnal whiskey, or

for washing more of my person than my hands and face, and I must not let my poor horse drink a drop of it! Why is this iniquitous system allowed to continue?

Old Deputy MUGGINS tells me that when the grand old Corporation, as he always calls it, applied to Parliament a few years ago to remedy these and similar grievances, the Directors and Shareholders of all the Gas Companies, and the Railway Companies, and the Tramway Companies, and the Dock Companies, and the Telegraph Companies, who were members of the House, all met in the Tea-Room, and, over a cup of that innocent beverage, vowed to combine together for the protection of their brother Monopolists against the common foe. The Corporation were defeated and routed on that memorable occasion, although supported by the then Government, but, I am delighted to hear that they are now engaged in undermining the watery Monopolists by sinking an Artesian Well in the eastern confines of the ancient City whence will shortly be seen bubbling up an inexhaustible supply of beautiful pure water for the use of every ratepayer of that fortunate locality, who may use it not only for such purposes as an imperious Company may dictate, but for every use that health, cleanliness, or comfort requires.

May their grand effort be successful, and their good example imitated,  
JOSEPH GREENHORN.

### TENNYSON IN SHOREDITCH.

So all day long the noise of prattle rolled  
Among the brawlers of the Civic Board,  
Until the Shoreditch Vestry, man by man,  
Had snapped their fingers in their Chairman's face,  
The Vicar. Then because his wound was deep  
(Inflicted by a pen thrown at his head),  
A band of Ratepayers began to cheer,  
Of Ratepayers, who hated all those rows,  
And bore him to a friendly neighbouring pump,  
A broken handle with a broken spout,  
That stood in the yard beneath the Vestry Hall:  
On one side stood the Vicar, and on one  
Those coarse-tongued brawlers—and their tongues were coarse!

Then spake the Chairman to the Ratepayers:

"The shindy of to-day exposes all  
The apish antics of a Bumble crew,  
The worst this town containeth. Straight it leads  
To a Reformed Municipality." &c.

[And the sooner the better!]

"MAY BE TO-DAY READ O'ER IN PAUL'S."—Mr. Punch, as a contented Parishioner and Citizen of London, begs herewith to congratulate the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's on the magnificent Reredos recently erected in the Cathedral of London. Like old Mr. Eccles in *Caste*, it "has its faults;" but, taking a broad view of the work as a whole, it may be said to require only the finishing touches of that great artist, Time, who, with his own method, and by the judicious use of London atmospherical effects of colour, will gradually bring its tone into harmony with the surroundings.

### A True Brett 'Un.

THE Master of the Rolls, in the Firework Case on appeal last week, was more brilliant than all Mr. BROCK's show. He quite



coruscated. And the laughter! He must be known as the "Master of the Revels," or "The Master of the Roars-of-Laughter." Impromptus too! apparently no preparation. But there's concealed art in these jocosities. What sort of art? BRETT Art, of course.

MR. BIRCH, sitting at Lambeth the other day, having been apparently much surprised at the conduct of a Policeman who had suffered a couple of housebreakers to slip rather too easily through his fingers in the Walworth Road, is reported to have mystified the constable in question by asking him whether "he thought he was living in Arcadia." Such language from the Bench suggests the possibility of giving quite a classic ring to the Police Reports, for, following up the Bironic method, it would not be difficult to haul an allusion to Bacchus and the Eleusinian Mysteries into a drunk and incapable charge, and adorn a case of mistaken identity with a reference to the dangers besetting a passage between Scylla and Charybdis. Mr. BIRCH commences well by boldly contrasting the Walworth Road with Arcadia, and no doubt he will effectively follow up this happy lead. Meantime the Lambeth Police might look up their Lempiere.



## ANNALS OF A QUIET NEIGHBOURHOOD.

*The Professor. "A—A—I HOPE MY LECTURE'S NOT BEEN TOO LONG, MR. CHAIRMAN!"*

*Chairman of Committee. "NA, NA, SIR. ON THE CONTRARY, I THINK YOU HAD A MOST PATIENT AUDIENCE!"*

## "ADVANCE, AUSTRALIA!"

*Mr. Punch's Greeting to "Our Boys" on the occasion of the Centenary of New South Wales, January, 26, 1888.*

ADVANCE Australia! Yes, my boys,  
And this seems something like advancing!  
In this great day all England joys;  
It sets our slowest pulses dancing.  
The echoes of your ringing cheers,  
From Sydney Cove the wide sea over,  
Sound welcome on our elder ears,  
Far as the old white walls of Dover.  
Winter's with us, and summer shine  
Graces your Austral January;  
But warm hearts greet across the brine,  
Your Centenary.

A hundred years! At Time's old pace  
The merest day's march, little changing;  
But now the measure's new, the race  
Fares even faster, forward ranging.  
What cycle of Cathay e'er saw  
Your Century's wondrous transformation?  
From wandering waifs to wards of Law!  
From nomads to a mighty nation!  
Belated dreamers moan and wail;  
What scenes for croakers of that kidney,  
Since first the *Sirius* furled her sail  
Where now is Sydney!

A hundred years! Let Fancy fly—  
She has a flight that nothing hinders,  
Not e'en reaction's raven cry—  
Back to the days of MATTHEW FLINDERS;  
Stout slip of Anglo-Saxon stock  
Who gave the new-found land its nomen.

Faith, memory-fired, may proudly mock  
At dismal doubt, at owlish omen.  
Five sister-colonies spread now  
Where then the wandering black-fellow  
Alone enjoyed day's golden glow  
Night's moonlight mellow.

Adelaide, Sydney, Brisbane, Perth,  
And merry Melbourne! There's a cluster  
Of towns that you may challenge earth  
In swifter brayer show to muster.  
Out of that hundred scarce a year [ment,  
But saw some new quick-spreading settle-  
To prove to moody thralls of fear  
What youth and Anglo-Saxon mettle meant.  
And now your century to its close  
Rounds amidst joy and jubilation,  
And faith in your fair future flows  
Through all the nation.

"The Island-Continent! Hooray!"  
Punch drinks your health in honest liquor  
On this your great Centennial day,  
Whose advent makes his blood flow quicker.  
We know what you can do, dear boys,  
In City-founding—and in Cricket.  
A fig for flattery!—it cloyes;  
Frank truth, true friendship,—that's the  
ticket!  
Land of rare climate, stalwart men,  
And pretty girls, and queer mammalia,  
All England cries, through Punch's pen,  
"Advance, Australia!"

"WINCHESTER REPEATERS" (nothing to do  
with the *School of Gunnery*).—The junior  
Wykehamites.

## ROWS ALL ROUND.

It seems rather a Sign of the Times—at  
any rate, of the *Standard*—that the three  
leaders in the latter excellent journal on the  
27th of January were all concerned with squab-  
bles. Leader No. 1 was devoted to the quarrel  
between Lord CHARLES BERESFORD and his  
official superiors; Leader No. 2 to the shindy  
between Sir EDWARD WATKIN and Mr. WIL-  
LIAM ABBOTT; and Leader No. 3 to the  
controversy between Sir COUTTS-LINDSAY and  
those angry recalcitrants, Messrs. COMYNS  
CARR, HALLÉ, and BURNE-JONES. Now, if  
Administrative efficiency and economy cannot  
be secured, Commercial claims cannot be  
adjusted, and the much-vaunted "dignity  
of Art" cannot be vindicated without all  
this public prosecution of personal quarrels,  
how are we to expect "peace in our times"?  
These petty litiads of ill-temper, originating  
commonly in the peppery "wrath" of some  
very minor Achilles, are more wearisome than  
the most long-winded of pseudo-epics, and  
ought to be sternly discouraged. Therites,  
with an epos all to himself, would hardly be  
a greater nuisance than the Petty Squabbler  
who should monopolise our Morning Paper.

Vox et Præterea Nihil.

(A Tip to our Tall-talkers.)

YES, we can talk across the World to-day;  
Yet gabble wired around the globe is gabble.  
What boots great Babel's spread, if what we  
say  
Is blatant babble?





## THE RETURN OF THE WANDERER.

LORD GRANDOLPH. "HA!—'TIS WELL!—I AM OBSERVED!!"



THE GALLERY OF THE MUSEUM





## THE HEIGHT OF MASHERDOM.

"WELL, TA-TA OLD MAN! MY PEOPLE ARE WAITING UP FOR ME, YOU KNOW!" "WHY, DON'T YOU CARRY A LATCH-KEY!" "CARRY A LATCH-KEY! NOT I! A LATCH-KEY'D SPOIL ANY FELLER'S FIGURE!"

## MR. PUNCH'S EXAMINATION PAPERS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

A PATHETIC PROTEST FROM MASTER PASSMORE.

MR. PUNCH prints the following characteristic letter without comment:—

DEAR PUNCH,—I've always rather liked you up to now, because I thought you stuck up for boys, but I do call it too beastly mean of you to go and set that humbugin paper you did on Fary tales! How do you expect a fellow to do a decent paper in things he hasn't looked at since he was a kid? And giving it in holidays too. My guv. said he'd like to see what sort of a paper I made of it, and so the consequens was I had to stay in a hole morning, and swot at those footling questions of yours! And all I got for it was that when the Guv. read my ansers, he said there were too things struck him forcibly—my injunuity and my ignorance, which was a nice remark for a fellow's pater to say! I don't beleive I did so *very* bad either, considering I wasn't given any time for prep., and the Guv. was in the Libry all the time, and I couldn't get a chance to crib, for there's nothing low in cribbing in Pass Exams, you know. But I'll tell you some of the things I put, and you'll see. You said "Mention and Criticize the condue of *Morjianna* after"—something or other. I didn't mention it, because I couldn't remember that part, so I only criticized. I said: "*The condue of Morjianna, tho not praps all that could be desired, was such that unless she had acted differently, could not have been otherwise.*" You see the tip is always to write as if you knew all about it, and then they may think you do and mark you,—praps—I did the same for the next one, which was: "Would I call *Puss in Boots* a strictly truthful annimale?"

That stumped me at first, for I'd forgotten who *Puss in Boots* was, as I hadn't been to the Pantimime then—but I managed to fox up something at last. I put: "*When we consider the circumstenses, and the times she lived in and all that, which were barbarous compared to now, we must come to the conclusion of her being as truthful as the ordinary run of cats of that age, and praps this, if cats spoke now, which I have not met any that do it.*"

The next was—"How did *Cassim Barber* discover *Ally* had become rich?"

I shotted that, and stuck down: "*By the swagger he put on.*" "What use did he make of his discovery?" I said: "*Sucked up to him and asked him to dinner.*" Because, whether that was the right anser 'or not, it's what most chaps *would* do, so I may have done that right.

Then you said, "describe fully: *Bluebeard's Chamber.*" I know I did that right, I put it was full of haredies and machines and things. How I knew was a long time ago, when I was a lower boy, I went to the Gayaty where it was done. I muffed "the halls and terrace where the Wonderful Lamp was," I said there was nothing much to see there except oil-jars—which was wrong.

For "the fizical and geographical features of the country at the top of the Benestork," I corked down "clouds,"—and chanced it.

In the B paper I did much better. To the question "if I considered Giants an intelligent race," I used my Commin Sense, as a form master we have, always tells us to when in doubt. I put:

"Giants posing big heads, we natully expect their branes to corispond, and so we find, for it is quite common to hear people tork of an 'Intellectual Giant.' So I consider they are."

The next was easy: "What is a Roe? What do Roes feed on?"

I wrote:

"All rather big stones are termed Roes, or (as it is more coreckly spelt) Rocks. Rocks live on the ground, and the Proverbial tells us, they gather moss, but they do not eat it—it sometimes eats into them."

The rest of the question was such orful rot, I left it alone.

About the wicked Uncles I put—and I don't see now where I was wrong!

"The end of a Wicked Uncle 'is he 'ushally dies, he is sometimes sorry, when he reppents."

I didn't try the one about the seven-legs boots, because I thought there was a catch in it somewhere. Another was: "Write down any hero who has sufered inconvenience from (a) the imprudence, (b) the disabedienco, of his wife."

I thought I'd better write something to that—just to say I'd tried. So I said:

"The disabedienco or imprudence of a wife is always inconvenient to a hero, leding as it does to rows, which are disagribble to live with."

You see I didn't exackly anser the question, because I didn't know it, but I think anyone but my Guv. would have allowed me som marks. I told him I'd done quite as well as I genally did in other Exams, and he larfed a nasty larf, and said he quite bleevved me, but I deserved plucking all the same. He turned everything I wrote into fun, and told me a few ours quite studdy of Fary Tales would do me a world of good. So I thought I'd write and ask you not to try to be funny that way again, because it's grind enuff to have to go in for exams, on usful subbies, without being bothered eraming up boshy nursery storys!

I remain, Your disappointed Friend,

MARCUS COCKSHOTT PASSMORE.

P.S.—I tell you *one* thing, I'll take joly good care I see *Punch* before the Guv. does *next* week. But I forgot—I shall be back at Skool then! M. C. P.

## LAMENT OF THE LATTER-DAY APE.

RESPECTED once were we,  
At least our fathers were,  
Brought home from over-sea  
In SOLOMON'S *galère*.  
Ah, those were merry days!  
As monkeys may not sing,  
We chatter of their praise—  
When SOLOMON was King!

Apes clung amid the sails,  
With gold about their necks,  
Below, with gleaming tails,  
Slim peacocks walked the decks;  
But now their plumes sublime,  
Men say, misfortune bring.  
'Twas not so in the time  
When SOLOMON was King!

Ah, now to organs tied,  
Or prisoned in the Zoo,  
Where vulgar crowds deride  
What sorrows we go through!  
Beseechingly we crave  
For nuts, and sweets, and string,  
Who did not so behave  
When SOLOMON was King!

Yet in those ages old,  
When apes might honour win,  
Man never had been told  
The monkeys were his kin;  
You know it now, and yet  
You bid the Ape go swing—  
The summers we regret  
When SOLOMON was King!

THEFT OF TRADE-MARKS.—What is the difference, in point of roguery, between removing your neighbour's land-mark, and appropriating his trade-mark? What brand does that manufacturer deserve who purloins another's? Brand for brand? In mediæval and merry England, the brand would have been imprinted on the offender with an iron instrument at a temperature too high to be tolerable; but modern civilisation prohibits that contrabrand proceeding. Would there be any cruelty, however, in the Merchandise Marks Act if it rendered a counterfeit of marks liable to be painfully but ignominiously branded with the Broad R?

## ISMAIL OUT OF EGYPT.



AIR—"HE'S ALL RIGHT WHEN YOU KNOW HIM."

Newest Version, arranged as a Duet As Sung by those clever Mammoth Comiques,  
Mr. Marriott and Ismail Pasha.

Mr. Marriott sings:—

THIS ISMAIL is a party as yer don't meet every day;  
He's liberal and hearty, free and easy in his way.  
You'd hardly call him scrupulous, but in this bloomin' East,  
Of all things parties care about they care for *that* the least.

(Spoken.) Yer know conscience ain't everything—or else I might not have a look in, or so my enemies say. You know what the aphoristic coo says about Conscience being like a thorn in a cushion—only another term for discomfort. I like an easy seat to my couch, so does every sensible chap with an eye to—shall we say the Woolsack? Ah! (to audience) you don't know ISMAIL, neither did I till now. But *he's* right enough!

Sings:—

He's all right when you know him, though the fellaheen he vext;  
You don't expect a Pasha too particular. Wot next?  
He wouldn't hurt a beetle; he's a pal as you can trust;  
He's all right when you know him, but you've got to know him fust.

Judge-Advocate's a lovely blend, my ISMAIL begs to state,  
And if he had his way, *he'd* be both Judge and Advocate.  
I see, "pray chuck in Jury," but he answers "that's all bosh,"  
And in the East—like many other things—won't never wash.

(Spoken by Ismail Pasha.) I'll lay a Palace on the Bosphorus to—TEWFIK's brain, that there ain't a better Judge nor Advocate in England nor what he is. He can shift it, can't he? See what he's done for me! As the *Times* says, I'd piled up my claims to five millions sterling, exclusive of maintenance charges. In course that was all bluff. I'd about as much claim on the Egyptians I'd so successfully spiled as a pickpocket would have for compensation for disturbance from the old bloke he'd robbed, and who had collared him in the

act and handed him over to the Cruahers. "In right and reason," sez the *Times* agin. "I was an undischarged bankrupt." Right? Ha, ha! Reason? Oho! In the Happy Land on the shores of Old Nile, beloved of Bondholders, ruled by "TOOTHPICK PASHA," and guided, philosophised and friendied by EDGAR WINCENT and MARRIOTT!!! What a larks! But the Judge-Advocate-General is a pal, if yer like—

Sings:—

He's all right when you know him, though  
he *was* so down on JOE,  
But, bless yer, they have made that little  
tiff up long ago,  
Lord SOLLY finds—as I do—he's a pal as  
one can trust.  
He's all right when you know him, but  
you've got to know him fust.

He's seed a deal of change, he has, he *was*  
a Lib: one time,  
Well, he's a Liberal now—to me. One  
Hundred Thousand! Prime!  
He'd never round upon a pal, for me he's  
spread it thick.  
Cash, public lands, three palaces! By  
Allah, he's a brick!

(Spoken.) I tell yer, you don't half know  
what the man can do. What does the  
*Times* say agin? "His people still groans  
under a load of taxation his scandalous  
prodigality and avarice of gain accumu-  
lated. . . He has been the source of most of  
the misfortunes of Egypt." Ha! ha!  
That's Me!!!—"And the friends of Egypt  
have to thank him for letting himself be  
coaxed into taking an indemnity from its  
penury of a couple of millions." Ho! ho!  
Thanks! And who was the "Coaxer"?  
Why, MARRIOTT to be sure,—

Sings:—

He coaxed that there two millions from  
young "Toothpick"—ain't he green?—  
And "Toothpick" why he'll "coax" it out  
of the "poor fellaheen." [can trust!  
Oh, MARRIOTT is a rorty pal, a pal as you  
He's all right when you know him, but  
you've got to know him fust!

Marriott sings:—

Off to Constantinople with his little lot  
of swag!  
"All's well that ends well," says the *Times*;  
it's *werry* pooty gag.  
Helooks as high and harty as King PHARAOH  
in his chariot. [along of MARRIOTT!  
He's safe for corn and fleshpots, and it's all

(Spoken.) Bless me! That's more than  
those squeezable poor fools, the fellaheen,  
will do, I fancy. But what o' that? "By  
the dexterity, rank, and influence of the  
counsel thus paradoxically employed, satis-  
factory results have been obtained at a  
minimum of inconvenience." *Times* agin!  
Quite so. Highly satisfactory—to me. "In  
no case could it have been imagined that a  
Member of the British Government would  
undertake the professional enforcement of  
enormous legal demands against a Sove-  
reign under that Government's special pro-  
tection, control, and tutelage." Praps. But  
then "All's well as ends well," don'tcher  
know!

Both sing:—

When a party has expensive tastes, and is  
an ex-Khedive,  
He *must* have lots of cash and land, else  
how's he going to live?  
Yus, { ISMAIL is a cute 'un } he's a pal  
as you can trust.  
He's all right when you know him, but  
you've got to know him fust!





### SOME OF THE ADVANTAGES OF MIXED UNIVERSITY EDUCATION.

"The result of having a considerable number of young women resident at Cambridge, with no other occupation than reading for an ordinary degree, might be very serious."—"Objections to 'Proposed admission of Women to Degrees,'" quoted by Miss Emily Davies, in her Letter to the Times, Jan. 26.

PROFESSOR PUNCH'S ANSWER IS GIVEN PICTORIALY ABOVE, AND INDICATES THAT THE YOUNG LADY UNDERGRADUATES WOULD FIND PLENTY OF "OTHER OCCUPATION" BESIDES, OR IN THE COURSE OF, READING FOR AN ORDINARY DEGREE.

#### A PLEA FOR THE PEOPLE'S POET.

SINGER for many and many a year  
Of songs that gladden the people's ear,  
"A Good Time Coming," and "Cheer, Boys,  
Cheer!"

Poet and patriot, champion still  
Of simple manhood and honest skill,  
Of pure Home-love, and of frank good-will:

Friend of JERROLD, and foe of wrong;  
Very Voice of the toiling throng,  
Its needs and yearnings, in touching song:

Punch's greetings! The world should see  
That needless sorrow come not to thee,  
Broken yet cheery at Seventy-three.

Let all who have heard, under many a sky,  
The manly music he lifted high,  
Thank-offering render to CHARLES MACKAY!

\*. A Fund is being raised for the literary veteran, Dr. CHARLES MACKAY—known wherever the English tongue is spoken or English songs are sung, who is now in his seventy-third year, in reduced circumstances, and broken in health, but bright, cheery, and industrious as ever.

Subscriptions will be received by the following

Bankers:—The Bank of Scotland, Lothbury, E.C.  
Messrs. ROBERTS, LUBBOCK & Co., Lombard  
Street, E.C.; Messrs. DRUMMOND, Charing Cross,  
W.C.; or by the Honorary Secretary, L. C. ALEX-  
ANDER, LL.D., Putney, S.W.

WEED F. WHEAT.—A Conference of British tobacco-growers, on the report of their Com-  
mittee, has decided on forming an Association  
"to resuscitate and encourage the cultivation  
and manufacture of tobacco" in the United  
Kingdom. Evidently they calculate upon the  
strength of their "returns."

## OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

THE Whirligig of Time is bringing about its revenges in this "so-called nineteenth century," when the dusty papers of the Record



Offices at home and abroad, and the Manuscript treasures, both of ancient houses and of private collections, are freely placed in the hands of lynx-eyed experts, who, in the enthusiasm of their plodding perseverance, are continually cinder-sifting the dust-bins and exhaustively inspecting the waste-paper baskets of the past—not to "make history," but to reveal truth plain and irresistible. One of the results of this laborious process comes before us, in the shape of the first volume of GASQUET's *Henry the Eighth* and the *English Monasteries*, which stating only hard facts, and dealing straightforwardly with the contemporary records, justifies beyond question the opinion now gradually, but surely, gaining ground, that some of the heroes of that epoch, such as CRUMWELL and his creatures, LEGH, LAYTON, AP RICE, and LONDON, were unmitigated scoundrels, that their Royal Master was every way worthy of them, and that the shape assumed by the Reformation in England was made possible by WOLSEY, of whose character SHAKESPEARE, by the mouths of Queen KATHERINE and of faithful GRIFFITH, formed so just, and yet so charitable an estimate. That there was some basis for the modern popular notion expressed in the first verse of a once well-known song, set to a catching tune, recounting how

"Many have told  
Of the Monks of old,  
What a jovial set they were,"

is certain, as this first volume proves. But "of the many who told," very few were worthy of credit, and their stories, even then, were only of "some" Monks of old," not all, just as Collegiate bodies, Guilds, and even Metropolitan Boards, may become lax and corrupt, and their conduct necessitate a commission of inquiry with a view to correction of abuses. And at such a period how conspicuously stands out the incorruptible honesty of the honest men! How virtuous it was at such a time to be virtuous! How difficult to be constant to a principle! How easy to save a head by giving way just enough to avoid the block! When a stroke of the pen might ward off a stroke of the axe, the alternative between "Is Life worth living," or Death worth dying, was not one which ordinary men could choose without considerable sacrifice one way or the other. GASQUET's *Henry the Eighth* is to be completed in two volumes, and will be a valuable work for historical reference.

By the way, the publications of the Record Office and modern research into these old letters and papers,—and "there are lots more where those come from,"—show that our old friend, COBBETT, whose work has been shelved for some time, was pretty accurate in his history, and had warrant for the strength of his convictions and the force of his expressions. There was an attempt some little time ago—whose it was I forget—to whitewash RICHARD THE THIRD, but it was only theoretical, and did not deal with facts such as are afforded by the *litera scripta* of the Record Office, and in reading the life of Lady JANE DORMER, transcribed from the ancient MS. notes of HENRY CLIFFORD in Lord DORMER's possession, I find that the Tudor Queen, whom we have all been taught to regard as "Bloody MARY," was, in the opinion of her Lady-in-Waiting and intimate companion, a charming Princess, and everything that was kind and considerate as compared with her haughty and violent sister, ELIZABETH, whose conduct as a girl seems to have been scandalous. What will the Private History of our own "Victorian Era" be when a century or two hence the cinder-sifters have taken the records in hand! However, it will not matter to us of the present day, at all events, who won't be there to contradict or applaud the verdict whatever it may be. And now to lighter themes.

Having read MARION's, I should say *Mario's Crucifix*, and recorded my delight in so stinted terms of praise, I determined to read MARION CRAUFORD's *Paul Patoff*. It has lain on my table for three weeks, and I have been perpetually trying to sit down to its perusal. Something has invariably prevented me. Once, having to leave town, I took away a volume with me, which on settling myself comfortably in an arm-chair, I discovered was the third volume. When I returned I made a spare hour, and took up Vol. I. Scarcely had I cut its pages than a visitor was ushered in to see me on important business. The next day I searched everywhere for it: in vain. All three volumes had disappeared. "Where, Madame," said I, addressing the Baroness, "is my *Paul Patoff*—three volumes, blue cover?" She explained that, thinking I had finished it, she had lent it to a friend. It was returned in three days: again and again I tried to snatch a few moments just to make a beginning; but no, fate was against me until one morning I exclaimed brilliantly, "If I defer it any longer I shall call it *Paul Patoff*," and seizing the first

volume I commenced reading, and as far as I have gone I am charmed by the style, and thoroughly interested in the story.

"Please look at this," said the Baroness, who is a novel-devourer, to me, at the same time handing me a book by ROWLAND GREY, entitled, *By Virtue of His Office*, in which she had marked certain passages. In one of them there is deserved praise bestowed by one of the characters on *The Children's Cry*, which appeared in one of Mr. Punch's numbers. But Miss Elizabeth Verity, the heroine of the novel (which the Baroness informed me interested her, though she is not sure if I should care so much for it) blushing takes to herself the credit of having written *The Children's Cry*. Sorry to contradict a lady whose name is "Verity," but I fancy Mr. Punch will tell us that it wasn't written by a feminine hand, and has since been republished in a collection of poems by the same author. Is it not so? Connie, the minor heroine, observes that she "only reads *Punch* and *The World*." A well-disciplined mind, evidently. But in spite of these attractions, I must return to *Paul Patoff*, or I shall lose the thread of the narrative. So no more, until I've done with these Russian Blue-books, from

Yours studiously, BARON DE BOOK WORMS.

## A BIT OF GRAPHIC.

(Of the Regulation Pattern.)

THE woodland ways, lately so golden-glorious in their radiant array, are now sorrowful in their solemn silence. The polychromatic Oread-haunted obscurities of October, the neutral-tinted nymph-trodden nebulosities of November have given place to the damp desolation and dreary drippingness of December, dimly prolonged into what is ironically called the Opening Year!

Chill rain-pools lie in steely stillness in rust-hued argillaceous ruts. Here the broad slowly-circling wheel of the rustic wain has weightily wound its deep-indenting way. Sparse and sodden speckles of consumptive-looking grass droop limply along the reeking sidewalk. Nature, indeed, seems stricken as with phthisis. Like an almost pulseless *poitrinaire*, she lies limply on her tear-stained couch, dying, dying, dying!

A belated bluebottle, buzzing blindly athwart a leafless forest vista, blunders incontinently into a broken rain-gemmed spider's web. The emaciated Arachne of the woods is all too weak and woesome to spring with the old obese ogreishness upon its prismatic prey. But the purblind, cold, palsied lump of azure idiosyncrasy, erst the swift and sonorous offal-hunter of ardent August, gives up the ghost nevertheless, too weak to whir a wing, too weary to unwind one clinging manacle of mucilaginous gossamer.

What is that lying at the gnarled serpentine root of yonder ink-barked elm? A frowy fungus, the foul-smelling "agaric of the holt?" No! It is something of equal unsavouriness, of parallel unpicturesqueness, yet of infinitely greater human interest. It is the rusty remnant of a tramp's abandoned highlow. A discarded shoe, no more! Yet how it teems with suggestion! Heel has it none, of sole scarcely a scrap, its frayed "uppers" hint not even distantly of DAY and MARTIN, its gaping ankle-pieces ungainly gape and uncomely curl and brutally bulge. But it once held a human foot!

"You may break you may batter the boot as you will,  
But the trace of 'the human' will cling to it still,"

as a less meretricious and more genuinely graphic MOORE might have sung—had he been man enough.

It is the only suggestion of "poor humanity" within sight, this damp and disintegrated highlow. But how it redeems mere Nature from negation and nullity! That is because "the low sad music of humanity" breathes through its gaping soul—I should say sole—and age-worn eyes—that is to say, eyelet-holes. It transmutes the languid lyric of Niobe-like Nature at once into a stirring epic of soul-flushed Life! The Roman was right:—

"Homo sum: humani nihil a me alienum puto."

—not even a human highlow! It speaks of poverty, it whispers of the wars of Class, it hints not indistinctly of the Unemployed! It bears a warning to the autocratic WARREN, and the truculent truncheon-bearers of Trafalgar Square! So here in the lonely slush-sodden heart of the leafless wintry woods, there wells up from the chill, but oracular lips of unpleasantly damp and dagged, but ever sublime and sympathetic Nature, a message to caste-ruled, cosily housed, but always despotically-disposed Man,—proud man, dressed in a little brief (Tory) authority, which soon the indignant voice of a too-patient, but omnipotent proletariat, shall hurl—

[No thank you! This is "hooking it to some useful end," with a vengeance. The article was evidently intended for a penny paper. A "blend" of graphic gush badly imitated from poor JEFFERIES, and partisan spite of the regulation political pattern, will not suit Mr. Punch.—Ed.]

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